Orders agreed vpon, and set downe by the right honourable Sir William Brooke Knight, L. Cobham, and L. Warden of her Maiesties Cinque Ports: and the right worshipfull Thomas Randolph Esquire, Master and Comptroller generall of all her Highnesse Postes, for her Maiesties seruice, concerning the Postes established in Kent, according to the direction and authoritie giuen by the Lords of her Highnesse most honorable priuie Councill in that behalfe.

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Forasmuch as the Lords of her Maiesties most honorable priuie Councill, haue found it expedient and necessary, by publique orders imprinted (both for the preuenting of inconueniences in time to come, and her Maiesties better seruice hereafter) to set downe and signifie her Maiesties pleasure touching the Postes of this Realme in generall: And by those orders haue bene pleased to giue authoritie, and specially to appoint vs the Lord Warden of the Cinque ports, and the Master of the Postes, to determine of, and set downe some speciall Articles for the reformation of matters of Posting particularly within the shire of Kent: we, according to the direction and intent of their honorable Lordships in that behalfe, haue appointed and published these Orders and Articles following.

That all the standing Postes appointed within the shire of Kent, shall enioy the benefite granted generally vnto all the Postes of this Realme, and by their honorable Lordships expresly set downe, namely, that for their better attendance vpon their charges and faithfull performance of their dueties, her Maiesties pleasure is, that they be exempted from all attendances at Assises, Sessions, Enquests and Musters.

That euery Post, hauing the name & place of a standing post, shal reside and dwell vpon the same (as by their Lordships is commanded) and shall haue alwayes in his stable, or in a readinesse, fiue good and sufficient Post horses at the least, with their furniture fitte and belonging, whereof two to serue for the packet, the rest to be ready at all occasions, for such as either in her Maiesties affaires, or otherwise, for more speed shall run the Post. They shall also haue three hornes, & the same blowne as by their Lordships is set downe, viz. passing through any towne, and meeting of companie, and thrice at the ende euery mile.

That euery Post shall keepe a faire and large paper booke well bound, as well to set down such Packets, as for her Maiesties affaires shall be caried by them, as also to register the names of all such as in her Maiesties seruice, or otherwise, ride in Post. And the same shall signifie, either vnto her Maiesties Secretarie, the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, or the Master of the Postes, at all times, and so often, as vpon occasions it shall be required at their hands.

That all strangers of what nation soeuer, either comming into this Realme, or going out, whether they ride in Post, or in iourney shall take their horses from stage to stage, & at the hands of the standing Posts onely, or with their knowledge and appointment. And for euery stranger so riding the Post with horne & guide, the Posts shall take for euery stage after the rate of two shillings fiue pence each horse: But if they ride in iourney, whether it be that the Posts do horse them, or appoint them, the owner of the horses shal receiue the full composition of his hire, & shal not exact or take aboue two pence the mile.

That likewise all Englishmen, naturall and borne subiects of this Realme, that either in her Maiesties affaires, or for their priuate affaires, for more speed shall ride in Post with horne and guide, shall also be horsed by the ordinarie and standing Posts as by their appointment, and shall pay for euery stage the prices accustomed and aboue mentioned.

And if in case Carriers shall come so fast, and in such numbers, that the Postes owne furniture shall not suffice. That it shall be lawfull for them to take vp, and appoint such as haue horses to hire, to supplie their want, taking and yeelding in such cases the same prices to the owners of the horses, that the Posts themselues do take for their owne. And to this end, the Posts shall be assisted and aided by the Maiors, Bailiffes, Portreeues, Constables, and other officers of their townes, according as by their Lordships is prouided for, and commanded.

That all ordinarie Through Postes appointed for the seruice of the Merchants for Flanders and France, at all times for seuerall dispatches and voyages, shall take their horse from stage to stage, and at the hands or appointment of the standing Postes, as well for themselues, as all such as are of their companie and conduction.

That no Post or guide, ryding with any man in Post, shall ride without his horne, and the same to blow as is prescribed, and shall not passe the next stage, without the consent and priuitie of the Post of the place, vpon paine of ten shillings to be payd to the Post iniured, and restitution of so much as he should haue gained, but shall bring the partie or company so offending, vnto the house of the ordinarie Post, where he is to receiue fresh horses, or shall signifie the same vnto the Post, (the partie or companie ryding, being men of sort, that for their pleasure will make choise of their lodging.) Neither shal he refuse to lade the male or other carriage of any man so riding, behind him, so that the same exceed not the weight of fourtie pounds at the most.

Yet is not intended hereby to hinder the libertie of any Englishman or naturall borne subiects of this Realme, ryding in iourney, but that he or they may make choise, and at their owne pleasure hire such horses, and at such prices as they can. Prouided, that they ride not with horne nor guide, which markes are onely reserued for the Postes to vse or allow of, for the more libertie in ryding, and better expedition.

And if any Hackney-man, or others hyring horses by the iourney, shall without the knowledge and liking of the Post, in the place vse either horne or guide, the Post of the next stage by whom he passeth, shall arrest and stay the guide, and commit him to safe custodie, and take such further order with the partie ryding, as by the necessitie of his busines and affaires, the Post in discretion shall finde expedient.

Also that the Postes for the more expedition of such packets as for her Maiesties seruice shall be caried by them, shall not stay aboue one quarter of an houre after they shall be brought vnto them, depart with them, and vse the diligence in ryding, set downe by the Lordships of her Maiesties Councill, that is to say, in summer, accounting from the Annunciation of our Lady vntill the feast of S. Michaell the Archangell, to ride after seuen miles the houre, and in the winter which is the rest of the yeere, fiue miles the houre, more or lesse as the way shall fall out.

Lastly, for the better obseruation of these orders in generall, and euery particular article thereof, it is hereby commanded, that from henceforth, if any Hackney-men, Ostelers, Tapsters, or others whatsoeuer, hauing horses to hire, shall be contrary to these orders, either directly or indirectly, deliuer any horses either vnto Englishmen or strangers, otherwise then appointed, without the priuitie and allowance of the standing Postes of the place, the officer or officers of the place, or the next Iustice of the peace of the shire shall commit the same person so offending to prison, & there to abide, vntil he haue put in sufficient bond with sufficient surety to the Post of the place for the due obseruing & keeping of these orders for the time to come. And to this end, her Maiestie, and the Lords of her Highnes priuie Councill, do straightly charge and command all Iustices of the peace, and Sheriffes of the shire, Maiors, Bailiffes, Portreeues, Constables, Headboroughs, and all other her officers & seruants, to see obserued, so far as in them lyeth, & to bee assisting and aiding vnto her said ordinary and standing Posts, for the due execution of the same, as they tender her Maiesties seruice, and will answere to the contrary. Allowed by the Lords of her Maiesties priuie Councill, and by their direction published the xxix. of Januarie. 1584.

Anno 27. Elizabet.

W. Cobham. Fra. Walsingham. Tho. Randolph.